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THE MAXX

image™ COMICS PRESENTS

THE MAXX™

Story • Art
SAM KIETH

Swell Dialogue
BILL MESSNER-LOEBS

Crap-on Dream Sequence
DAVE FEISS

Finishes
JIM SINCLAIR

Lettering
MIKE HEISLER

Color
STEVE OLIFF & OLYOPTICS

Logo
CHANCE WOLF

Film Output
KELL-O GRAPHICS

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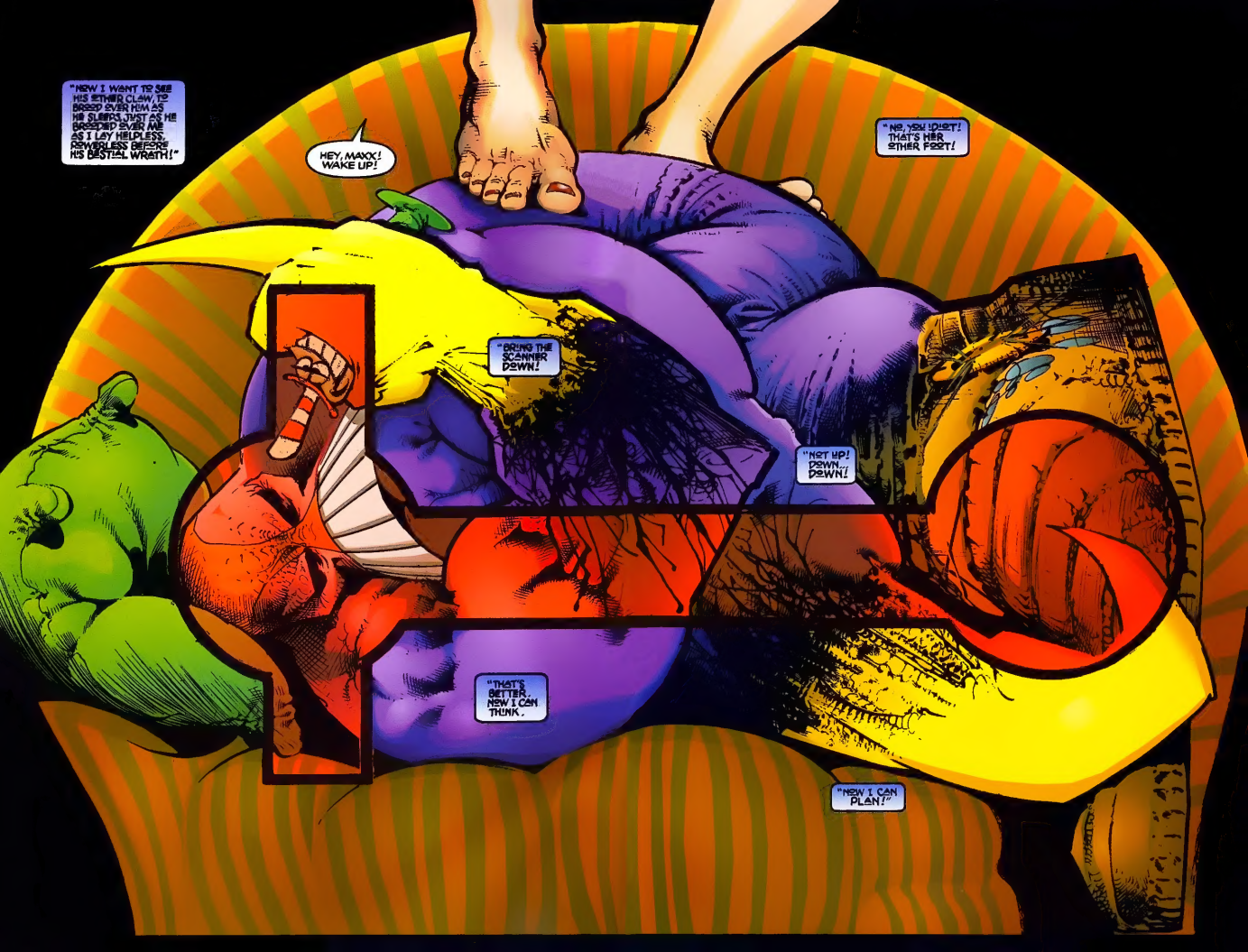
Printed in Canada

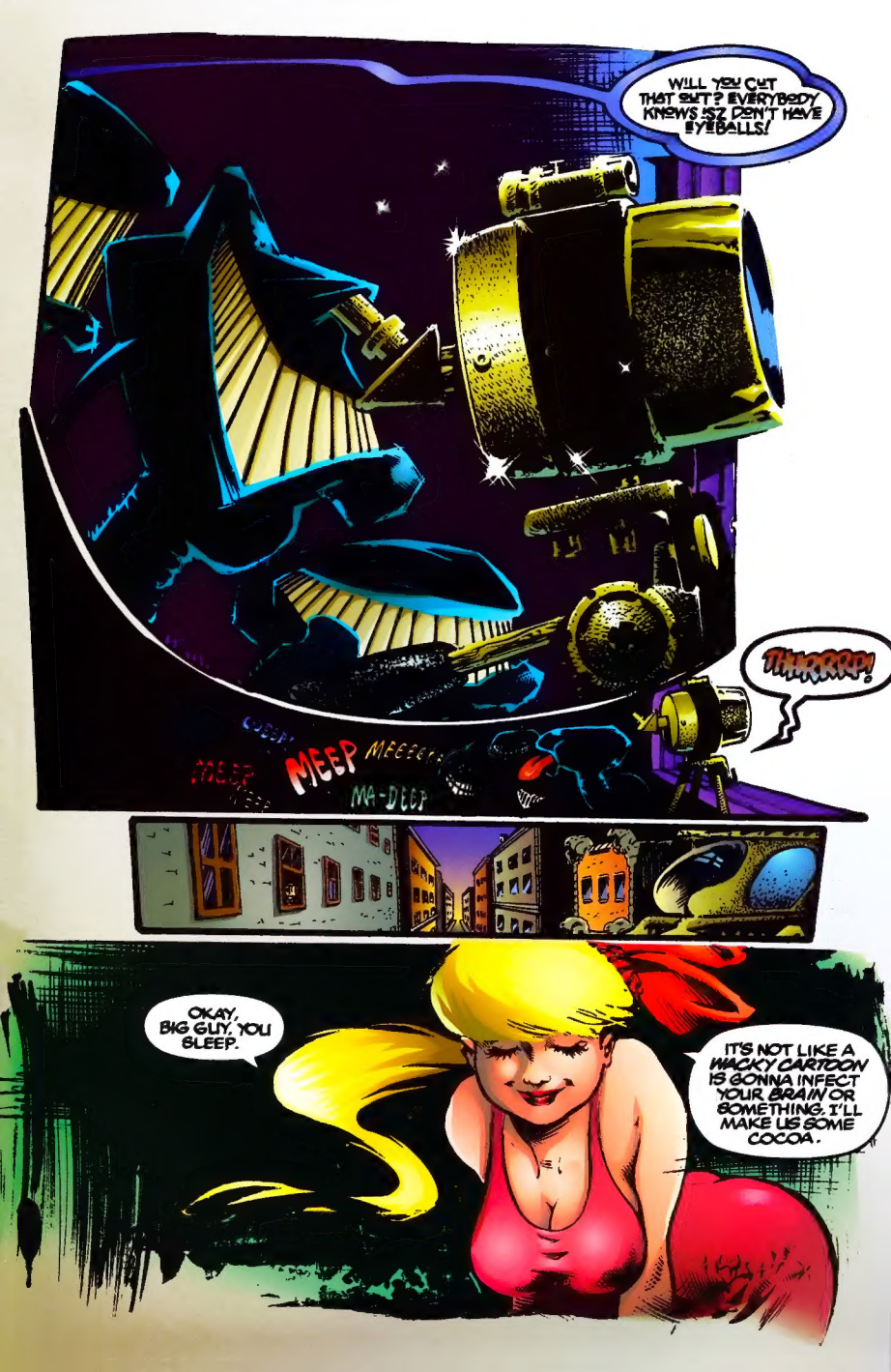
"A BIT MORE TO THE LEFT...MORE... MORE...THERE.

"NOW DOWN... FURTHER...

"AHHH. PERFECT. THAT'S HIS ACCURSED CLAW... THE ONE THAT ALMOST...


"NOW I WANT TO SEE HIS ETHER CLAW, TO BREED EVEN HIM AS HE SLEEPS, THAT AS HE BASTARD EVER ARE AS I LAY HELPLESS, POWERLESS BEFORE HIS BESTIAL WRATH!"
HEY, MAXX! WAKE UP!
"NO, YOU IDIOT! THAT'S HER ETHER FEET!
"BRING THE SCANNER DOWN!
"NOT UP! DOWN... DOWN!
"THAT'S BETTER. NOW I CAN THINK.
"NOW I CAN PLAN!"

IT'S THE SAME EVERY SATURDAY MORNING. YOU CURL UP WATCHING CARTOONS AND FALL ASLEEP!
AND WHAT CARTOONS? THE CRAPPON INNA HAT! MUST BE THE STUPIDEST CARTOON EVER MADE!
I MEAN... "THE CRAPPON INNA HAT TEAMS UP WITH JEAN-PAUL SARTRE TO FIGHT NAUSEA!" CARTOONS TODAY ARE SO PRETENTIOUS!
AHA!
I COULD BLOW THEM BOTH AWAY FROM HERE! NOT THAT I WOULD, OF COURSE. I DON'T OPERATE THAT WAY! STILL...



WILL YOU CUT THAT OUT? EVERYBODY KNOWS ISZ DON'T HAVE EYEBALLS!

THHRRRP!

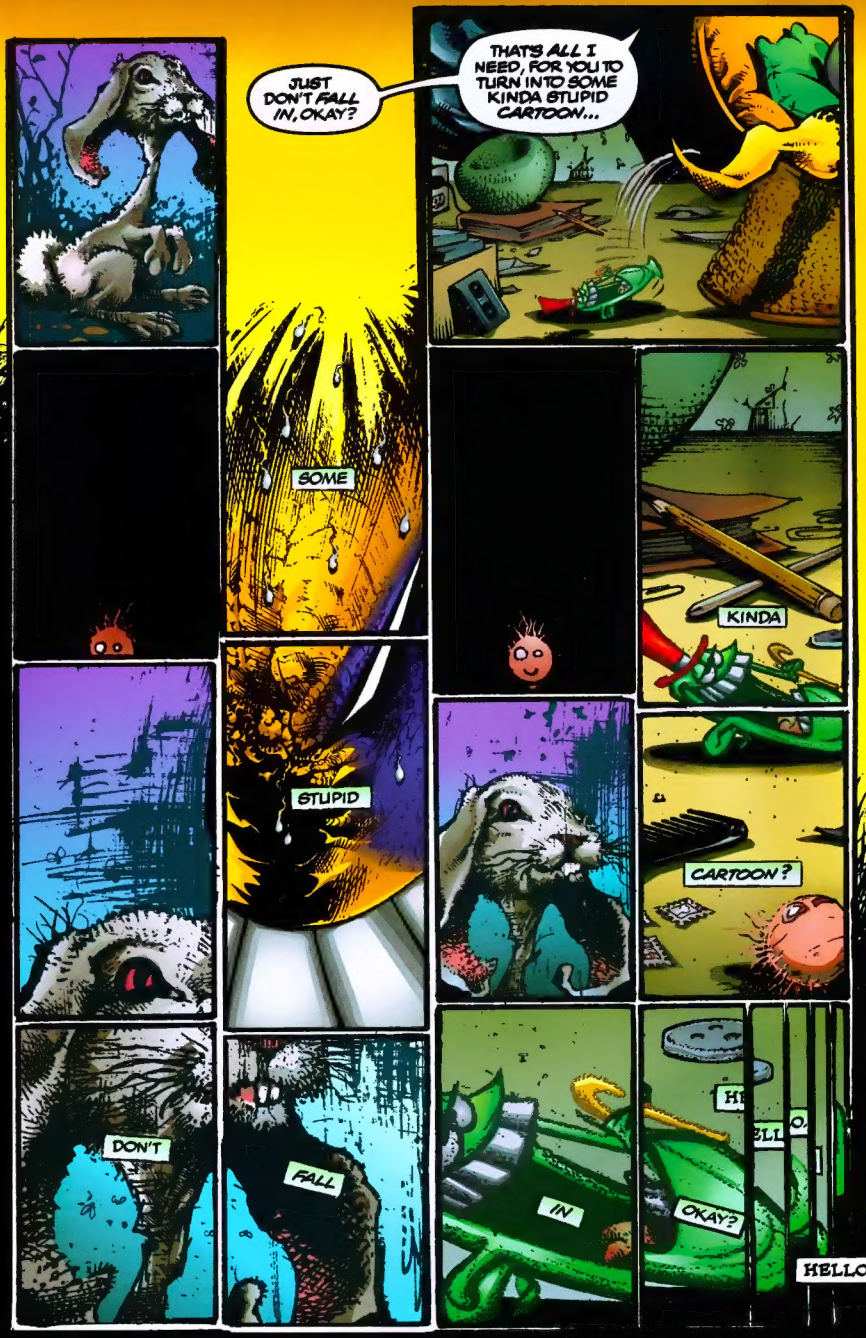
MEEP

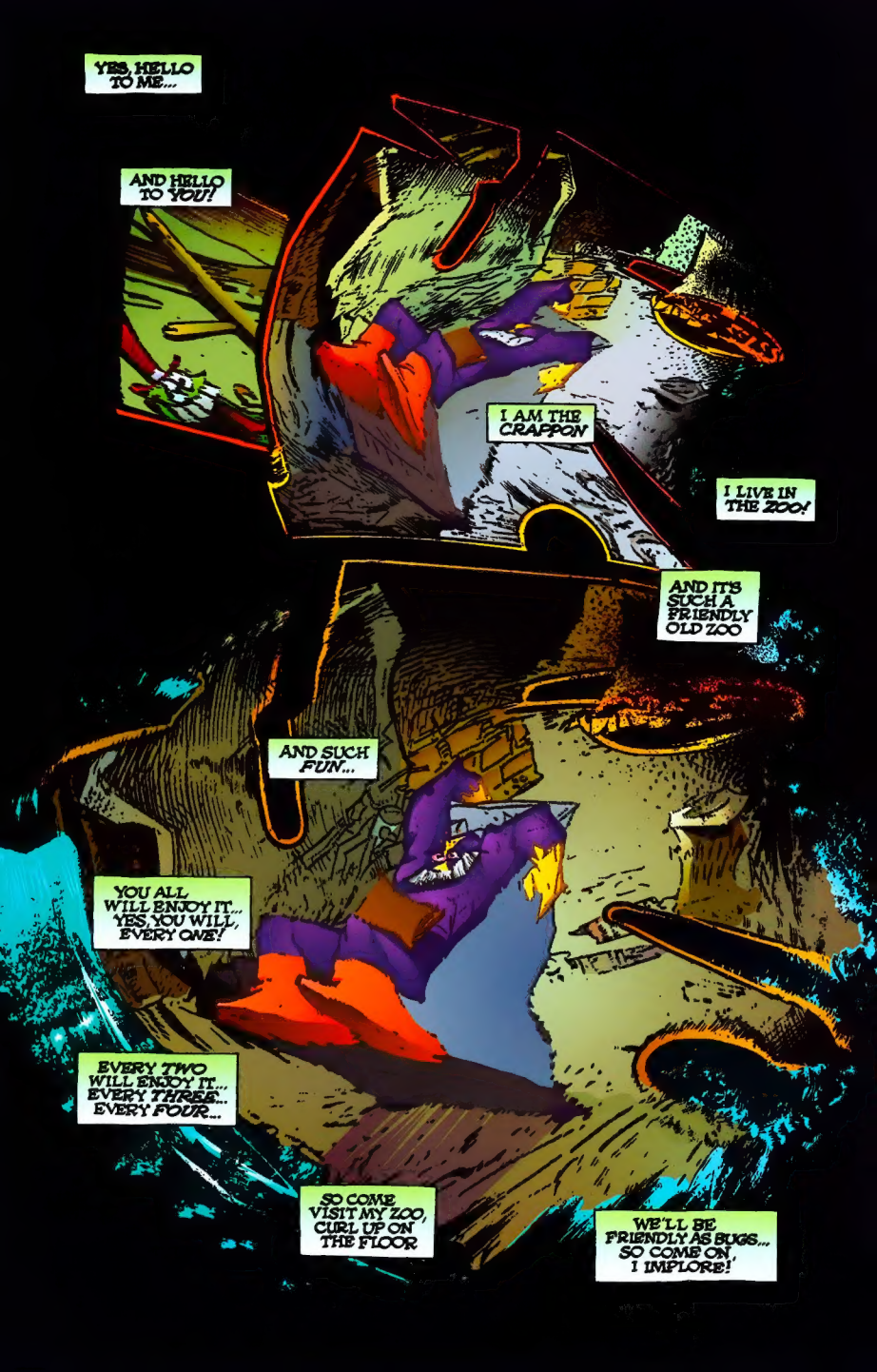
MEEEEEE

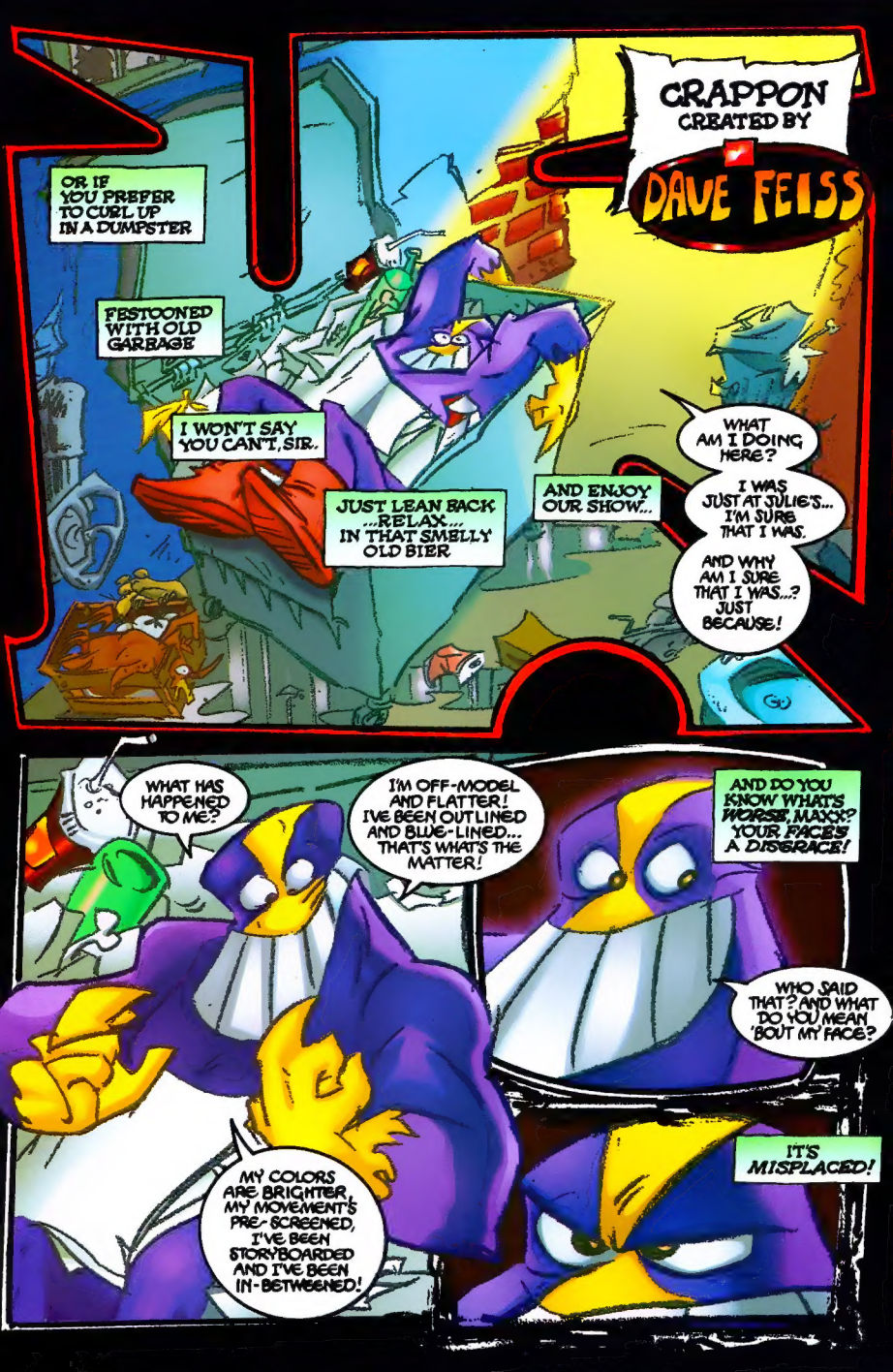
MA-DEEP

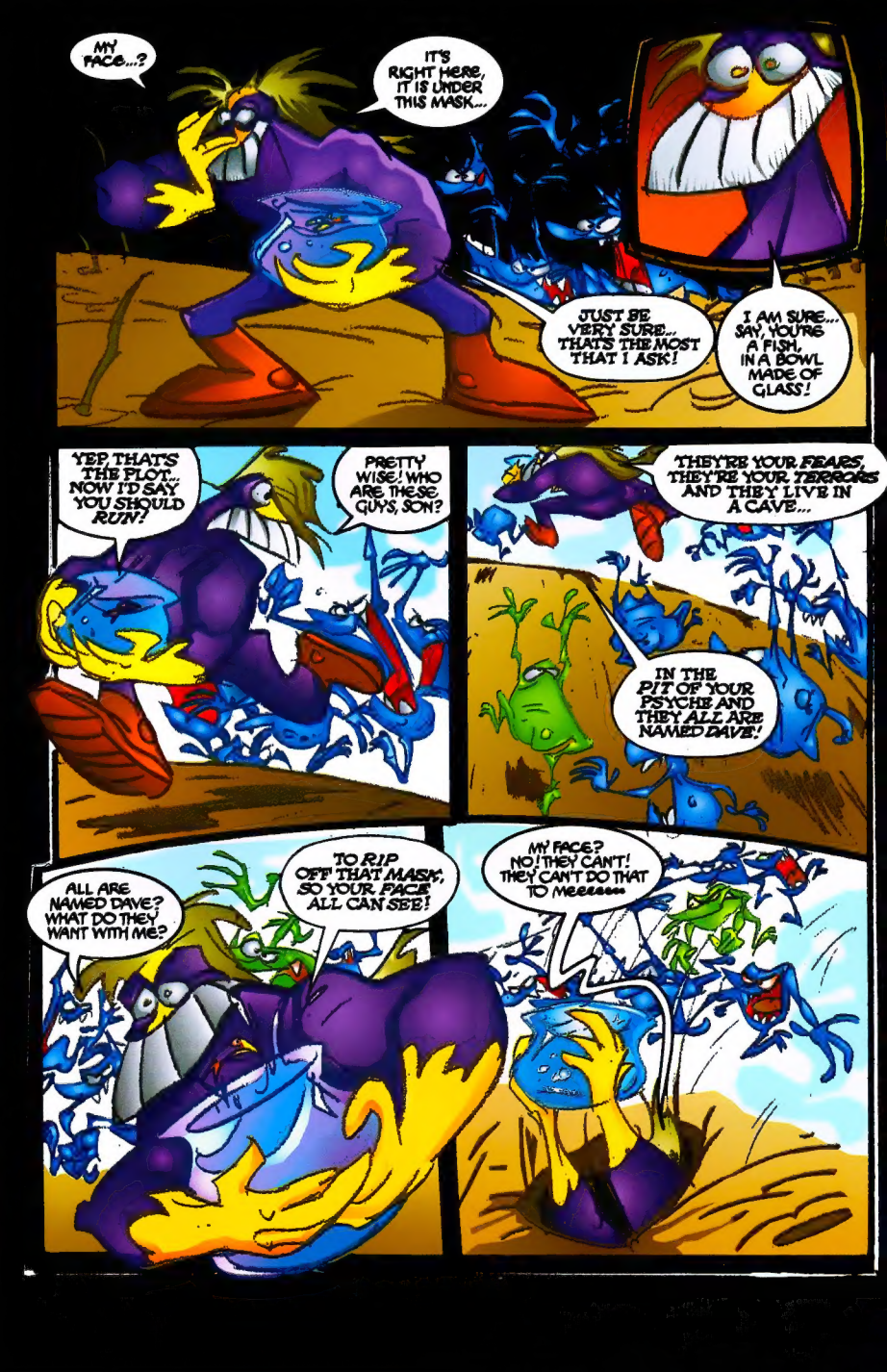
OKAY, BIG GUY, YOU SLEEP.

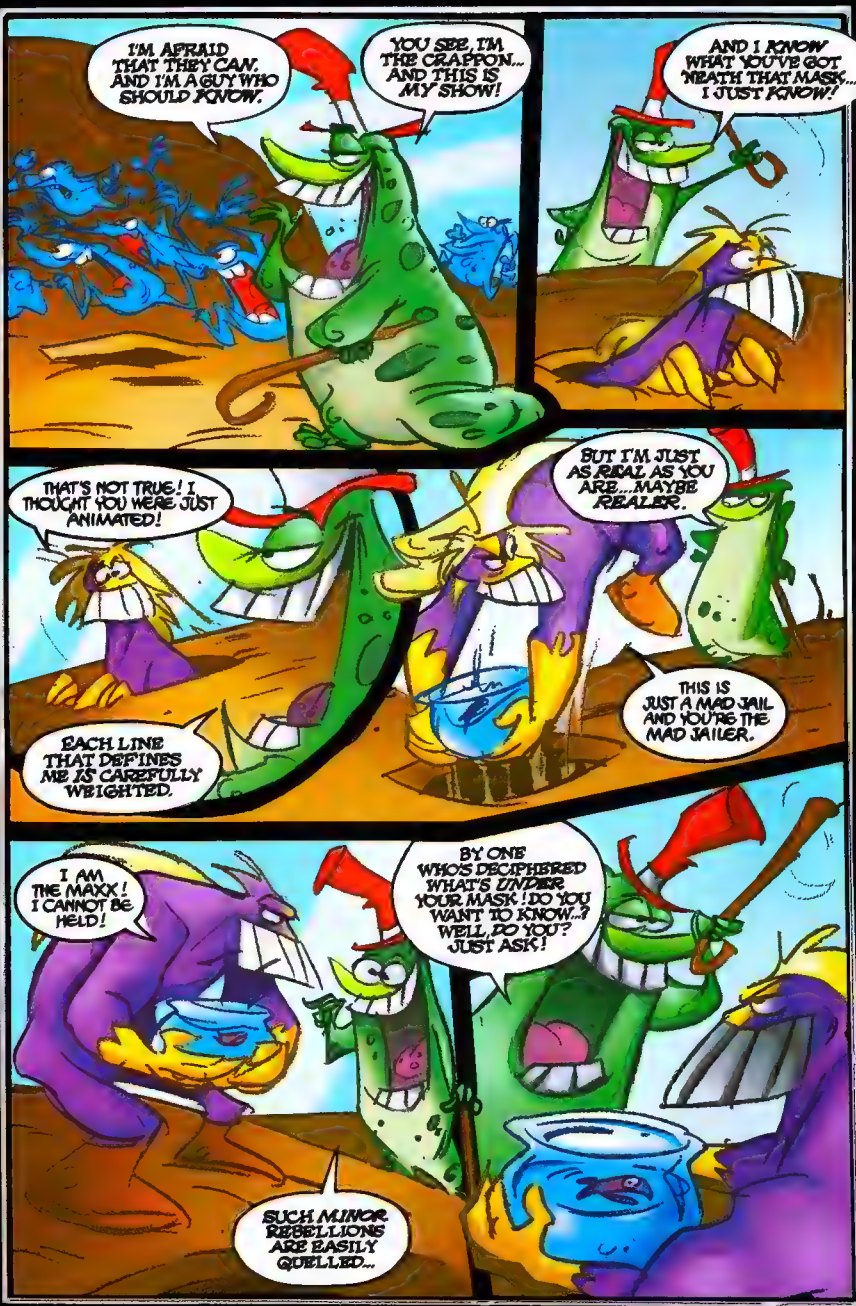
IT'S NOT LIKE A *WACKY CARTOON* IS GONNA INFECT YOUR *BRAIN* OR SOMETHING. I'LL MAKE US SOME COCOA.


JUST DON'T FALL IN, OKAY?
THAT'S ALL I NEED, FOR YOU TO TURN INTO SOME KINDA STUPID CARTOON...
SOME
KINDA
STUPID
CARTOON?
DON'T
FALL
IN
OKAY?
HELLO.


YES, HELLO TO ME...
AND HELLO TO YOU!
I AM THE CRAPPON
I LIVE IN THE ZOO!
AND IT'S SUCH A FRIENDLY OLD ZOO
AND SUCH FUN...
YOU ALL WILL ENJOY IT... YES, YOU WILL, EVERY ONE!
EVERY TWO WILL ENJOY IT... EVERY THREE... EVERY FOUR...
SO COME VISIT MY ZOO, CURL UP ON THE FLOOR
WE'LL BE FRIENDLY AS BUGS... SO COME ON, I IMPLORE!


CRAPPON
CREATED BY
DAVE FEISS
OR IF YOU PREFER TO CURL UP IN A DUMPSTER
FESTOONED WITH OLD GARBAGE
I WON'T SAY YOU CAN'T, SIR.
JUST LEAN BACK ...RELAX... IN THAT SMELLY OLD BIER
AND ENJOY OUR SHOW...
WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
I WAS JUST AT JULIE'S... I'M SURE THAT I WAS.
AND WHY AM I SURE THAT I WAS...? JUST BECAUSE!
WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME?
I'M OFF-MODEL AND FLATTER! I'VE BEEN OUTLINED AND BLUE-LINED... THAT'S WHAT'S THE MATTER!
MY COLORS ARE BRIGHTER, MY MOVEMENT'S PRE-SCREENED, I'VE BEEN STORYBOARDED AND I'VE BEEN IN-BETWEENED!
AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S WORSE, MAXX? YOUR FACE'S A DISGRACE!
WHO SAID THAT? AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'BOUT MY FACE?
IT'S MISPLACED!


MY FACE...?
IT'S RIGHT HERE, IT IS UNDER THIS MASK...
JUST BE VERY SURE... THAT'S THE MOST THAT I ASK!
I AM SURE... SAY, YOU'RE A FISH, IN A BOWL MADE OF GLASS!
YEP, THAT'S THE PLOT... NOW I'D SAY YOU SHOULD RUN!
PRETTY WISE! WHO ARE THESE GUYS, SON?
THEY'RE YOUR FEARS, THEY'RE YOUR TERRORS AND THEY LIVE IN A CAVE...
IN THE PIT OF YOUR PSYCHE AND THEY ALL ARE NAMED DAVE!
ALL ARE NAMED DAVE? WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH ME?
TO RIP OFF THAT MASK, SO YOUR FACE ALL CAN SEE!
MY FACE? NO! THEY CAN'T! THEY CAN'T DO THAT TO Meeeeee


I'M AFRAID THAT THEY CAN. AND I'M A GUY WHO SHOULD KNOW.
YOU SEE, I'M THE CRAPPON... AND THIS IS MY SHOW!
AND I KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT 'NEATH THAT MASK... I JUST KNOW!
THAT'S NOT TRUE! I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST ANIMATED!
BUT I'M JUST AS REAL AS YOU ARE...MAYBE REALER.
THIS IS JUST A MAD JAIL AND YOU'RE THE MAD JAILER.
EACH LINE THAT DEFINES ME IS CAREFULLY WEIGHTED.
I AM THE MAXX! I CANNOT BE HELD!
BY ONE WHO'S DECIPHERED WHAT'S UNDER YOUR MASK! DO YOU WANT TO KNOW...? WELL, DO YOU? JUST ASK!
SUCH MINOR REBELLIONS ARE EASILY QUELLED...

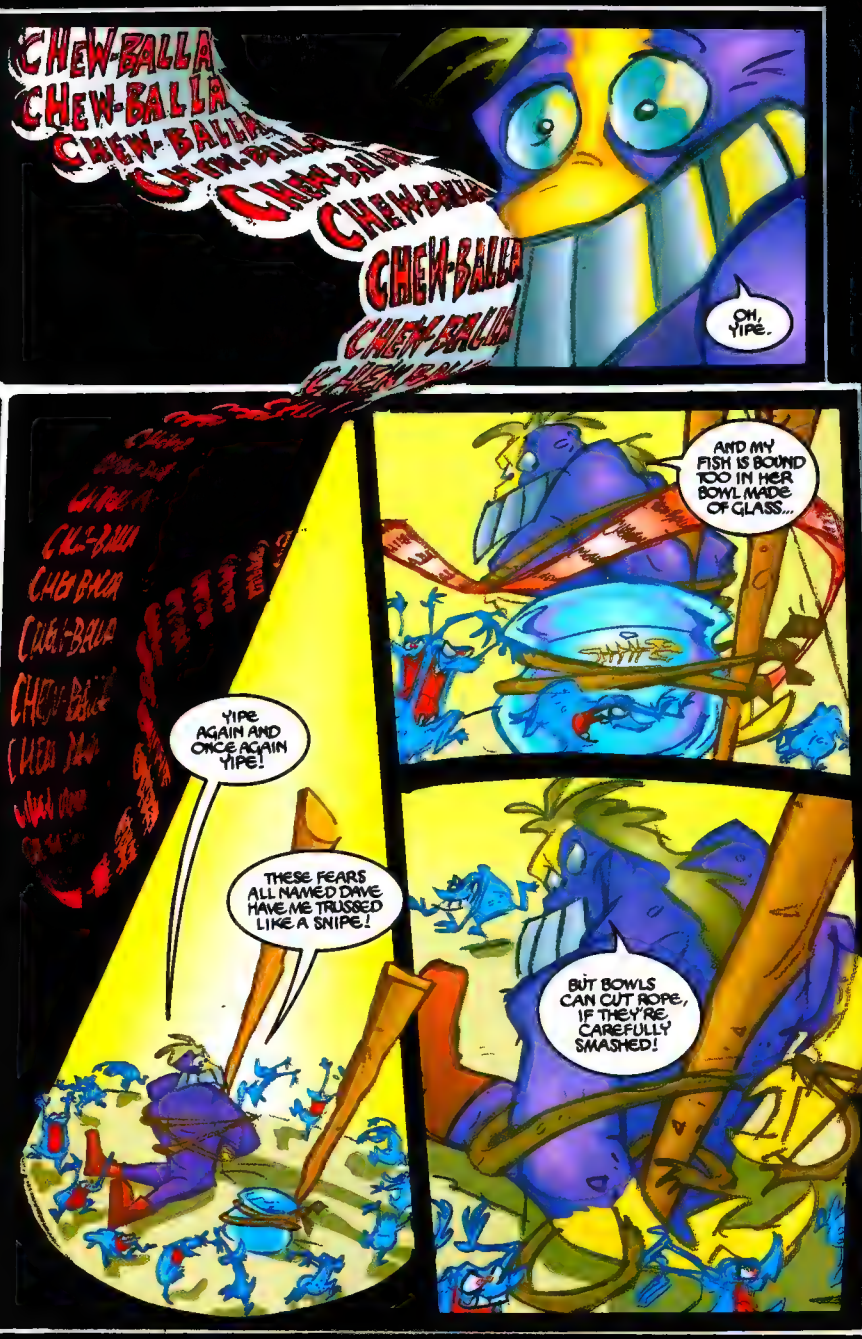
I KNOW IT ALL, AND TO PROVE THAT I DO, THIS DUDE'S THE STRAIGHT SKINNY. HE'S HEAD OF MY CREW.
AND THIS GUY'S THE POOP...
AND THIS ONE'S THE SNOT. I'D SAY HE'S THE DOPE, BUT HE'S NOT...
NO, HE'S SNOT!
FRIEND FISH, THEY ARE TRYING TO TEAR OFF MY MASK... TO SHOW ME THE THING THAT I'M FRIGHTENED TO ASK... PLEASE GIVE ME ADVICE. I'M BEGGING YOU, PLEASE...
THAT FISH IS YOUR CONSCIENCE, AND SHE'S WHEEZED HER LAST WHEEZE!
YOU'RE ALL ALONE, MAXX... YOUR MISSION'S FORGOT. THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN REMEMBER IS SNOT! YOUR FACE IS A FIGMENT OF A MAN WITH NO HEAD!
YOUR MASK IT IS EVIL AND YOUR FISH... IT IS DEAD!

MY MASK IS NOT EVIL! IT'S A CLEVER DISGUISE!
I CHOSE IT TO HIDE FROM THE PRYINGEST EYES.
SO I COULD DO GOOD! AND MY FISH IS NOT DEAD!
MY FISH IS ALIVE!
THIS IS NOT IN MY HEAD!
EEEKS! MY FEARS HAVE RETURNED!
IT IS TIME THAT I BOOKED!
I COULD FACE MY FACE! IT IS TIME THAT I LOOKED!
BUT MY FACE ISN'T HUMAN. OF THAT I AM SURE!
IT'S THE MOST HORRID, HORRIBLE THING TO OCCUR, AND IT'S COVERED BY SCALES OR IT'S COVERED BY FUR!

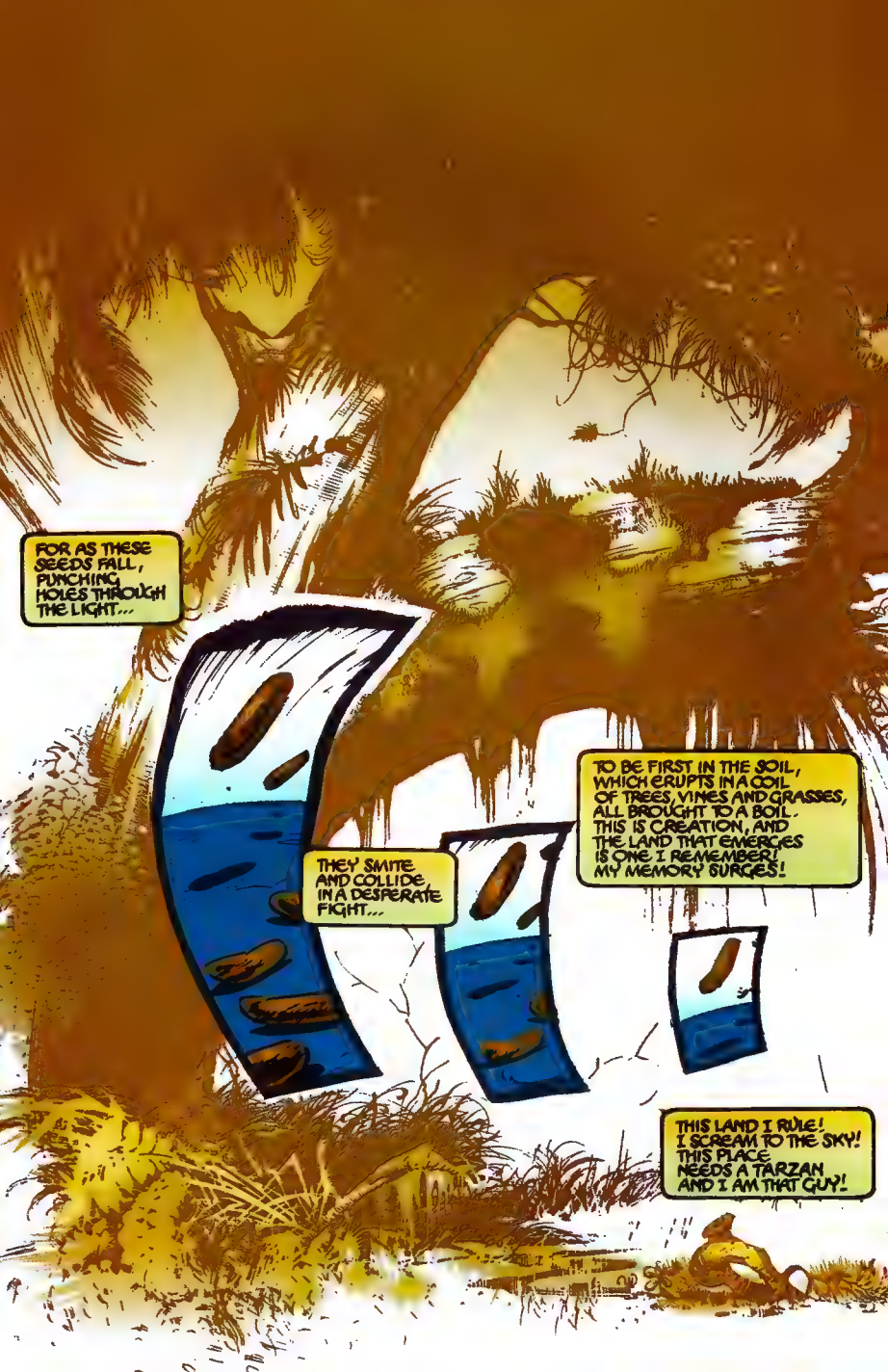
IT COULD BE A BEAR'S HEAD
OR MAYBE AN OWL!
IT COULD LOOK LIKE FISH EGGS, LAID ON WITH A TROWEL!
SOMETHING GROTESQUE... SOMETHING MOST FOUL!
LIKE THE FINS OF A SHARK WRAPPED IN SOME-BODY'S BOWEL!

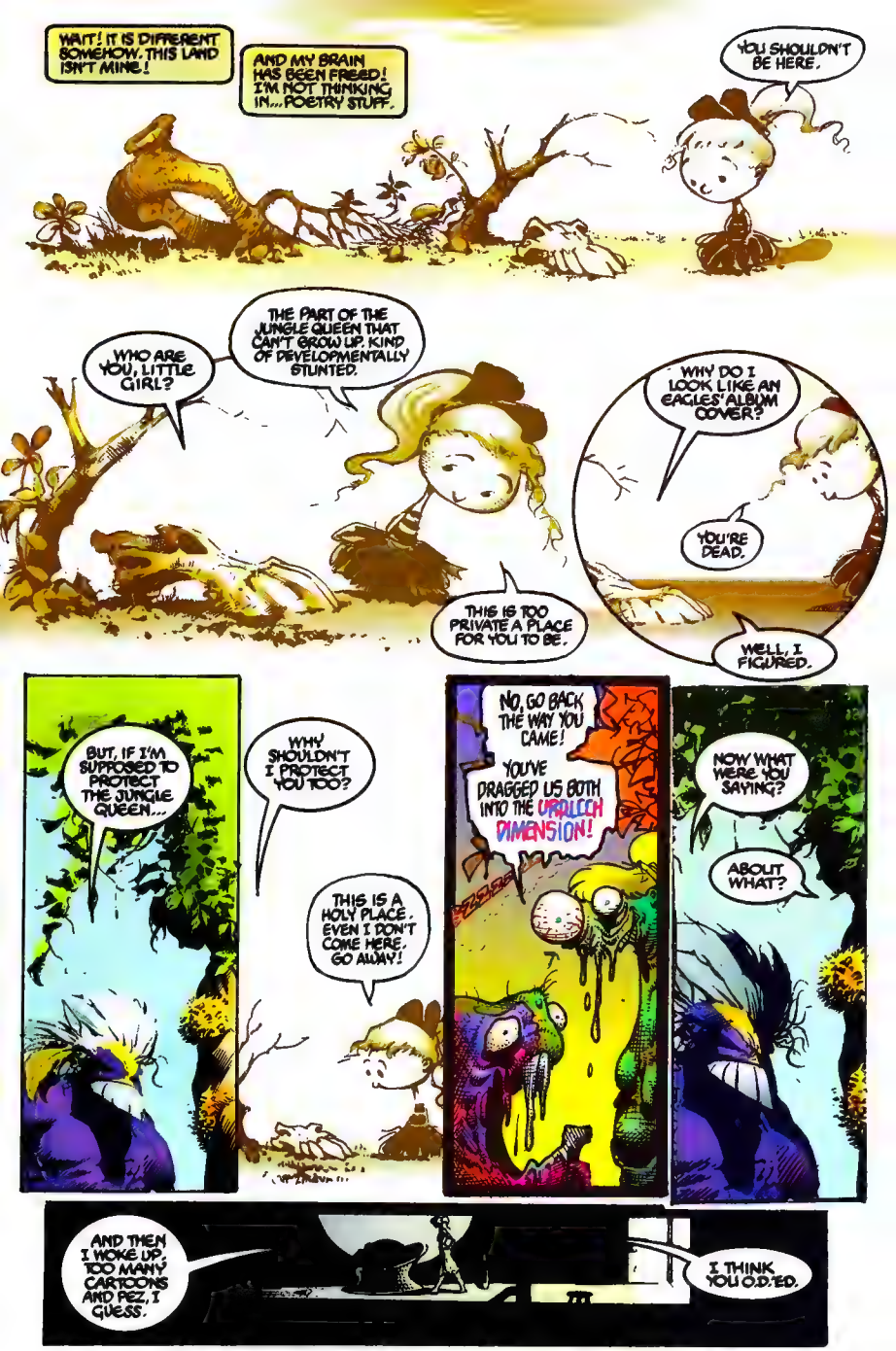
THIS IS GETTING QUITE DEEP, AND I'M STARTING TO FEAR... I'LL BE DROWNED IN AN OCEAN OF DIET ROOT BEER...
DIET ROOT BEER?
YES, THAT'S WHAT IT SEEMED.
I'VE FLASHED BACK TO MY DUMPSTER. SO ALL THIS WAS A DREAM?
NO, I GUESS NOT. FOR THESE GUYS ARE STILL HERE...
STILL RIPPING...
AND TRIPPING ME, AND WHAT I FEAR...

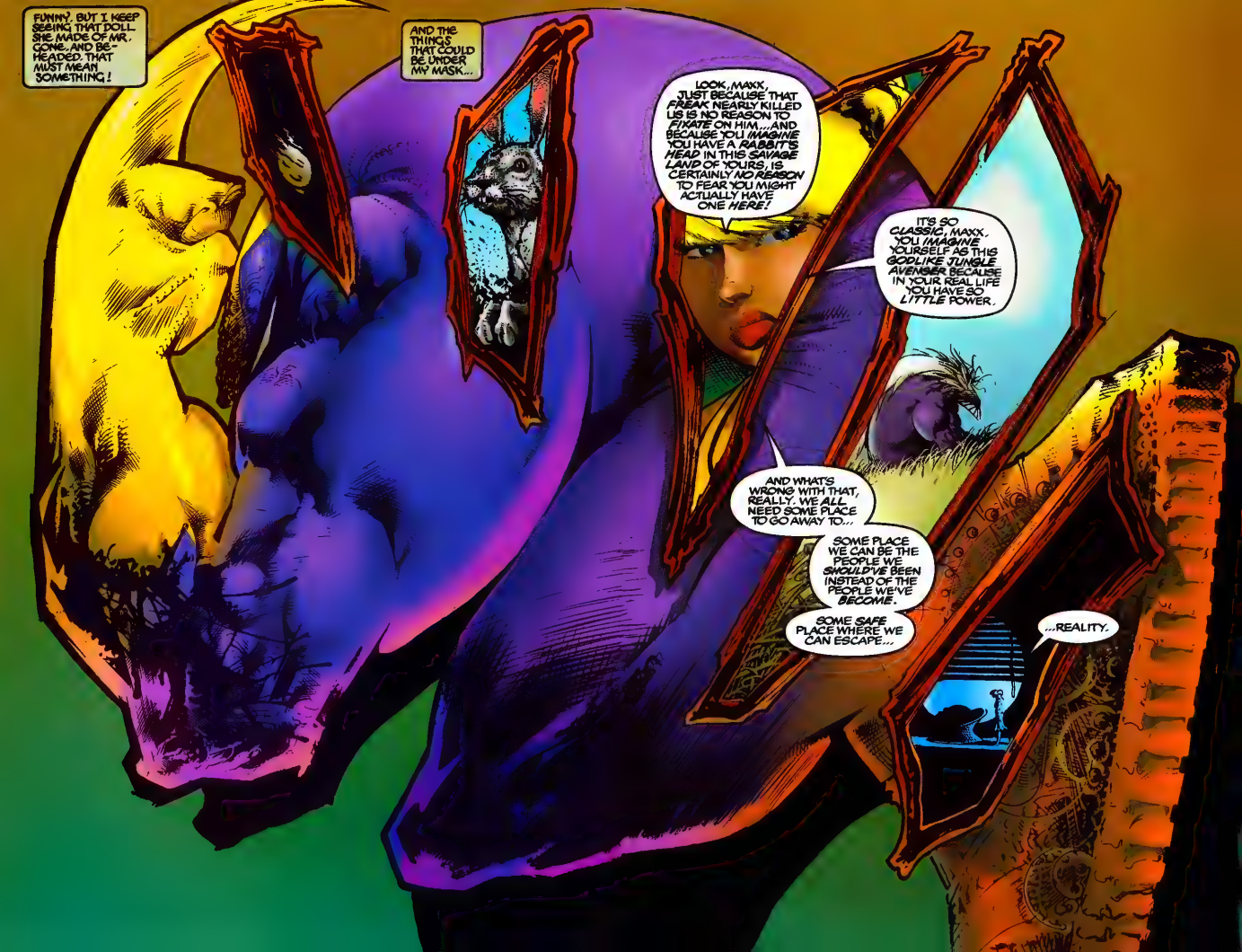
...IS IF THESE GUYS KILL ME...
...AND MAKE ME ROLL OVER...
...I'LL BE JUST AS DEAD...
...BACK ON JULIE'S OLD SOFA.


CHEW-BALLA
CHEW-BALLA
CHEW-BALLA
CHEW-BALLA
CHEW-BALLA
CHEW-BALLA
CHEW-BALLA
OH, YIPE.
AND MY FISH IS BOUND TOO IN HER BOWL MADE OF GLASS...
YIPE AGAIN AND ONCE AGAIN YIPE!
THESE FEARS ALL NAMED DAVE HAVE ME TRUSSED LIKE A SNIPE!
BUT BOWLS CAN CUT ROPE, IF THEY'RE CAREFULLY SMASHED!

I'M SURROUNDED BY FEARS. THERE'S JUST ONE THING TO DO!
I MUST FACE WHAT THE FEARS MAKE ME FEARFUL TO DO.
I MUST RIP OFF THIS MASK! IT IS TIME THAT I KNEW...
...WHAT LIES BENEATH... IT IS BEANS?
IT IS PODS! WHAT A STRANGE THING TO DO.
TO KEEP SEEDS IN MY FACE... AND HOW ODD!


FOR AS THESE SEEDS FALL, PUNCHING HOLES THROUGH THE LIGHT...
THEY SMITE AND COLLIDE IN A DESPERATE FIGHT...
TO BE FIRST IN THE SOIL, WHICH ERUPTS IN A COIL OF TREES, VINES AND GRASSES, ALL BROUGHT TO A BOIL. THIS IS CREATION, AND THE LAND THAT EMERGES IS ONE I REMEMBER! MY MEMORY SURGES!
THIS LAND I RULE! I SCREAM TO THE SKY! THIS PLACE NEEDS A TARZAN AND I AM THAT GUY!


WAIT! IT IS DIFFERENT SOMEHOW. THIS LAND ISN'T MINE!
AND MY BRAIN HAS BEEN FREED! I'M NOT THINKING IN... POETRY STUFF.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
WHO ARE YOU, LITTLE GIRL?
THE PART OF THE JUNGLE QUEEN THAT CAN'T GROW UP. KIND OF DEVELOPMENTALLY STUNTED.
THIS IS TOO PRIVATE A PLACE FOR YOU TO BE.
WHY DO I LOOK LIKE AN EAGLES' ALBUM COVER?
YOU'RE DEAD.
WELL, I FIGURED.
BUT, IF I'M SUPPOSED TO PROTECT THE JUNGLE QUEEN...
WHY SHOULDN'T I PROTECT YOU TOO?
THIS IS A HOLY PLACE. EVEN I DON'T COME HERE. GO AWAY!
NO, GO BACK THE WAY YOU CAME!
YOU'VE DRAGGED US BOTH INTO THE URRLCCH DIMENSION!
NOW WHAT WERE YOU SAYING?
ABOUT WHAT?
AND THEN I WOKE UP. TOO MANY CARTOONS AND PEZ, I GUESS.
I THINK YOU O.D.'ED.


FUNNY, BUT I KEEP SEEING THAT DOLL. SHE, MADE OF MR. GONE, AND BE-HEADED. THAT MUST MEAN SOMETHING!
AND THE THINGS THAT COULD BE UNDER MY MASK...
LOOK, MAXX, JUST BECAUSE THAT FREAK NEARLY KILLED US IS NO REASON TO FIXATE ON HIM... AND BECAUSE YOU IMAGINE YOU HAVE A RABBIT'S HEAD IN THIS SAVAGE LAND OF YOURS, IS CERTAINLY NO REASON TO FEAR YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY HAVE ONE HERE!
IT'S SO CLASSIC, MAXX, YOU IMAGINE YOURSELF AS THIS GODLIKE JUNGLE AVENGER BECAUSE IN YOUR REAL LIFE YOU HAVE SO LITTLE POWER.
AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT, REALLY. WE ALL NEED SOME PLACE TO GO AWAY TO...
SOME PLACE WE CAN BE THE PEOPLE WE SHOULD'VE BEEN INSTEAD OF THE PEOPLE WE'VE BECOME.
SOME SAFE PLACE WHERE WE CAN ESCAPE...
...REALITY.

HIDE...
I KNOW THERE ARE THINGS I'D LIKE TO HIDE FROM...
MY MASK... I CAN FEEL IT CRAWLING...
SHHHH
PLEASE... MAKE... IT... STOP...
JUST REST NOW. IT'S OKAY... S'OKAY...

Hi—it's me. Coupla things this time—

No, we don't have a subscription service, and neither does Image.

The other thing is — if you do a piece of art, it's better if it's inked in black and white, not colored or in pencil. You have a better shot at getting it in the letters column if it's black and white inks.

Sometimes I forget to bring it up enough, but without the swell dialogue by Bill Loebs, this book would be loads weaker. Bill volunteered lines like "thinking out loud," the Cheers thing, and other cool stuff. The plot ideas are mine, but Bill adds much-needed experience and structure.

For more Groo nonsense, check out the SAVAGE DRAGON (read THE MAXX#3 if you don't get it). Sorry about the misprint on the "GROO is so dumb" letter in issue #4, but you got the idea!

This issue has a good friend of mine, Dave Feiss, a professional animator, creating the Crap-on dream sequence. As Steve Oliff was coloring these pages, he said to me, " " " "Hey, Sam—how many pages are there in this dream sequence? Looks like more dream pages than MAXX pages. You slackin' off or something?" The dream sequence, which seems like random filler, is an integral part of the MAXX Mythos. While some will love it and others will hate it, it guarantees thought. But I wanted to see how far we could stretch my realism into Dave's cartoony style.

Dear Sam,

OK, what's the deal? I'm referring to the strange commentary that has appeared in fine print at the bottom of the inside cover of every issue of THE MAXX: down there in the middle of all that legal mumbo-jumbo. C'mon, you know what I mean! Well, let me refresh your memory a little. Issue #1 "Why are you reading this?" Issue #2: "You gotta stop reading tiny print, it'll hurt your eyes!! Issue #3: "Stop reading this —GET A LIFE!" Sound at all familiar? I know I can't be the only person to notice this strangeness! Can I? I mean nobody else puts things like this in their comics. So why do you? (Not that I read that section of EVERY comic, mind you, just THE MAXX! No really!)

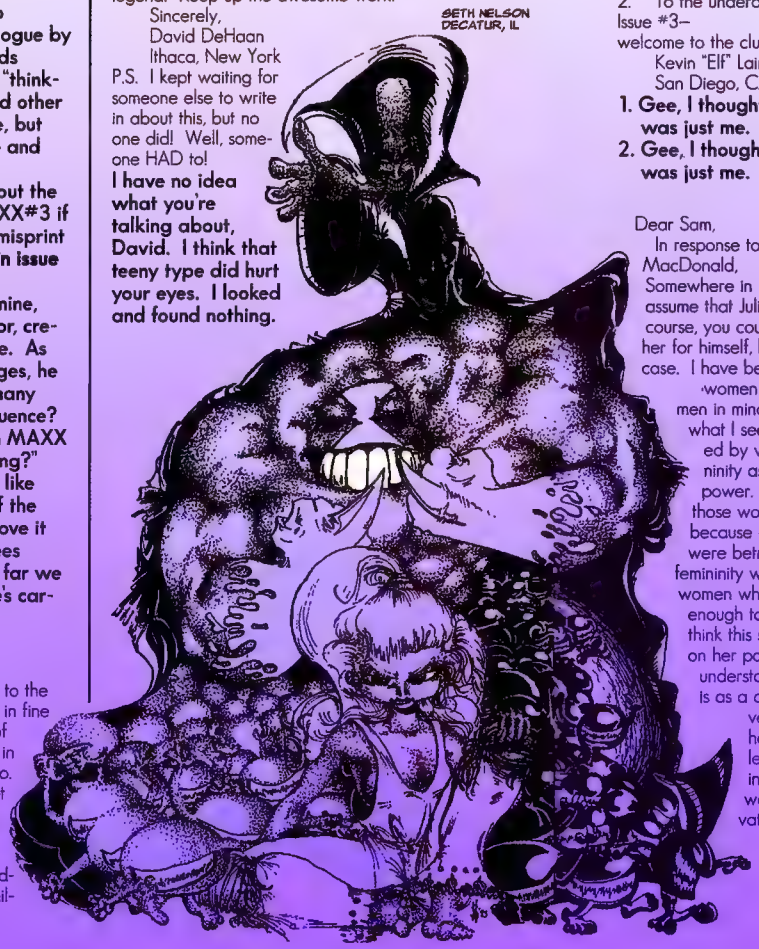
So...what's the story? There MUST be a story behind it! Well anyway, keep it up! It only adds to the wonderful weirdness of THE MAXX legend! Keep up the awesome work!

Sincerely,
David DeHaan
Ithaca, New York

P.S. I kept waiting for someone else to write in about this, but no one did! Well, someone HAD to!

I have no idea what you're talking about, David. I think that teeny type did hurt your eyes. I looked and found nothing.

BETH NELSON
DECATUR, IL



Dear Sam,

I am truly impressed by your work on THE MAXX. The story is intriguing and the dialogue by Bill Messner-Loebs fits the characters perfectly. Do NOT let him leave the book!

I'm outta here,
Jason Seip
Walnutport, PA

Don't worry—I've been trying to get rid of Bill for years. He's a hard man to shake.

Dearest Samsonite,

1. Does Mr. Gone have an obsession with bathrooms? He's always in one.
2. To the underdog in Issue #3— welcome to the club.

Kevin "Elf" Laird
San Diego, CA

1. Gee, I thought it was just me.
2. Gee, I thought it was just me.

Dear Sam,

In response to Heidi MacDonald,

Somewhere in L.A. (Issue #2), why do you assume that Julie is dressing for men. Of course, you could argue that Sam is dressing her for himself, but I think that this is not the case. I have been told many of times that women generally do not dress with men in mind, but for other women. This is what I see in Julie. In a world dominated by violent men, she uses her femininity as a source of masculine power. She is hard-hearted toward those women who were raped, because maybe, she feels that they were betraying women. She equates femininity with strength, and she resents women whose femininity is not strong enough to defend them from men. I think this shows a lack of understanding on her part. I don't think she really understands that the nature of women is as a counterpoint to men, and vice versa. Maxx, on the other hand, has the opposite problem. Please don't let him fall into the trap of glorifying women as the instruments of salvation.

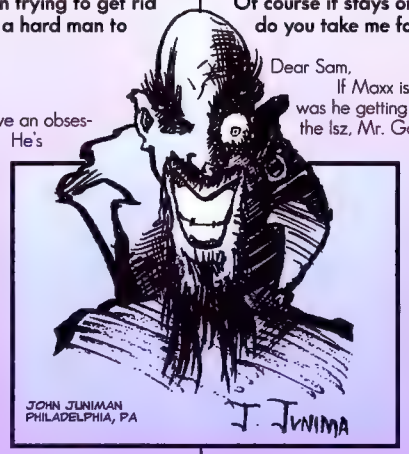
Jason Butler
Las Vegas, NV

Dear Mr. Kieth,

On the first page of Issue #2, the refrigerator has a hole in it and light coming out. Is this supposed to tell us you think that when the door is closed, the light is on?

Confused about the light,
Nick Cross
Canal Fulton, OH

Of course it stays on. What kind of fool do you take me for?



Dear Sam,

If Maxx is king of that world, why was he getting jacked by Ret'qark'n, the Isz, Mr. Gone, etc.? Don't they have respect for their king?

Clayton "Pudge" Johnson
Seattle, WA

MAXX doesn't have much of a grip yet on what's happening. Thinking that he's the center of the Outback is only the first of many mistakes to come...

Dear Sam,

1. Will Julia stop showing off and help Maxx fight?
2. What kind of car does Maxx drive?
3. Why does Maxx's costume tear so easily?
4. Who's the big fat guy in Darker Image #1?
5. Would Pitt beat Maxx in a challenge?
6. Does Maxx have a private? (Sorry, I just have to know.)

Sincerely,
Shane Freuidiger
Canyon Country, CA

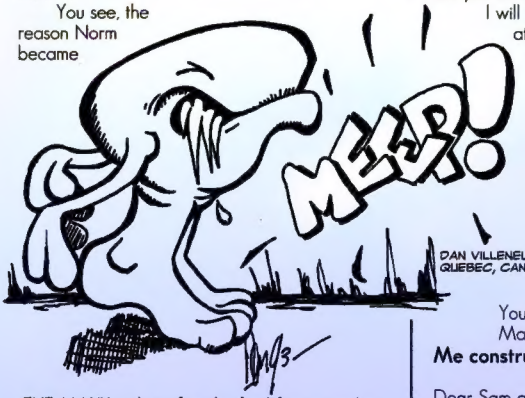
1. Gee, I think I'd rather see Julia show off than watch Maxx fight.
2. Maxx doesn't have a car—he rides in Julie's VW. (In issue #4, her car was in the shop.)
3. 'Cause it's more fun to draw it that way.
4. Ret'qark'n
5. We'll just have to find out in Issue #7
6. Well...yeah...sure...Maybe you and the guy that asked about Gone's bathroom should get together...

Dear Sam (AKA Sam Malone)

I have figured out THE MAXX's secret identity. You aren't gonna believe who is under the costume. Well here it is— the secret identity of THE MAXX.

THE MAXX really is Norm from "Cheers." I have conclusive evidence that proves my theory. Number one, THE MAXX has back problems because he spent so many years bending over the bar to steal beer at Cheers. Number two, note the many Cheers references. Number three, Norm is both short and fat just like THE MAXX.

You see, the reason Norm became



THE MAXX is that after the final five episodes were over, he couldn't find work and just felt like living in a box and fighting a really ugly bad guy named Mr. Gone. Last but not least, his mask represents Carla because it will bite your hand off if you get too close to it. Julia represents Cliff who was always a good buddy of Norm's. Above all else, you, Mr. Sam Kieth, represent Sam Malone because you created THE MAXX much like Sam Malone did Cheers.

So, until the mask comes off, keep up the good work and I'll look for our favorite beer-drinking hero on re-runs.

Your fan,
Adam Lilly
Country Club Hills, IL

Maybe this thing's gotten out of hand...

Sam,

1. Can Maxx ever take off his mask? If he does, what will happen?
2. Does Maxx have any pets?

Your devoted follower,
James Martin II
Taunton,MA

1. This issue should answer that question for you.

2. Not since he's been homeless.

Dear Sam,

On Heidi MacDonald's point of "gratuitous-ly badly dressed women," I agree AND disagree. If she were referring to the glitzy portrayal of most of the newer female characters, which amount to nothing more than comic porn to get the kiddies to buy the book, then I would agree. But, since madd Maxx is blazing his own trail untrodden by the masses, then I definitely cast my ballot to allow you literary and artistic license. I want to see where you'll take us.

Actually, I find your female portrayals as compellingly appealing as Vaughn Bode's work, but you should not construe from my support that I will condone any blatant, overt, deliberate, gratuitous slandering of anybody or anything.

Hail and Farewell,
Charlie DeZego
Bronx, NY

Me construe?
Me construe?
(I just like the way that sounds...)

Dear Sam,

Are THE MAXX comics going to get weirder? (I hope so!)

Your fan ever,
Mark Ristaino

Me construe? Me construe?

Dear Sam and the gang,

Sorry, I can't think of anything to say weird enough to fit your lettercol. Uh, will this do? When I first read Darker Image and MAXX#1-3 in sequence, I was barbecuing sausages on my gas ring, and ever since, the smell of barbecued sausages on a gas ring reminds me of THE MAXX. I hope this doesn't gross out your vegetarian readers.

Seriously: I first bought THE MAXX#3 following consistently good reviews in the British fan press and the recommendations of people I trusted. I had not liked your Marvel stuff (not that I read a lot of Marvel these days), but I was impressed as %)+@!! with your artwork here. Then I found myself--and bought all the back issues (all three of them). After this came the episode of the sausages.

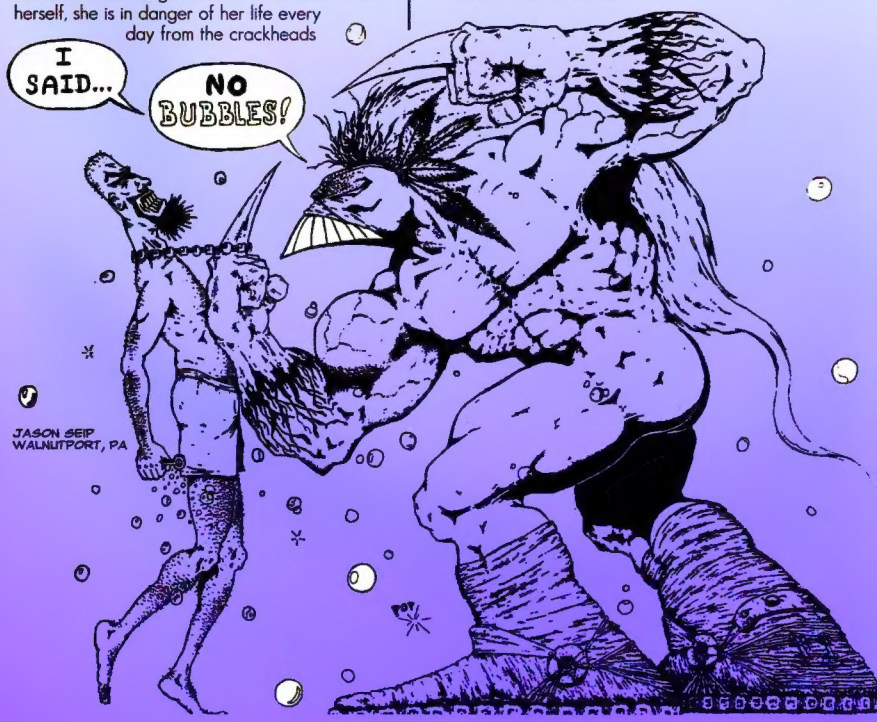
The truth is that you were misplaced at Marvel. You don't belong in the superhero genre (which I love anyway) but in an older and equally honorable American tradition: the clumsy, bigfooted, imaginative adventure stories of E.C. Segar, Al Capp, and even Will Eisner. While on one level THE MAXX is the most imaginative strip to come along in years, on another it is the resurfacing of an old and distinguished stream of the history of our artform. I would ask you what are you doing at Image, but never mind: whatever works...Only don't, please don't ever have a crossover with any other Image character (except maybe SPAWN); it would be the biggest piece of continuity idiocy since Marvel shotgun-married Kirby's Eternals with the Marvel Messyverse.

I couldn't believe Heidi MacDonald's letter.

Look, to take it from the top, the difference between poetry and exploitation is sensitivity of treatment. Specifically, the image of a troubled woman with a secret rape in her past is a big enough cliche (it's been done to death in dozens of movies, novels and comics) because it's been done with no consideration, interest or involvement, picked up out of repertory of stock ideas in order to wave the authors' sensitivity at the public. But when the very shape of your panels declare that there is not one line in your comics that goes unconsidered, how can this apply? Andrew Vachss tackles topics which, in another's hands, would be pure exploitation; but as he knows them from the inside, he charges them with an intense, even a moral life.

As for Camille Paglia & Co., my view about them is that if I want pretentious overhyped pseudo-intellectual drossy media phenomena, I don't have to cross the ocean to find them. Julie Winters' enthusiasm for her is part of her characterization as a self-endangering, near the edge lady with psychological problems. How then can MacDonald quote Paglia's rants. Sure enough, she knows enough to fluster and dominate the wretches she meets as a "freelance social worker" (a dysfunctional social worker, as you said); but what does this gain her? As she tells Gone herself, she is in danger of her life every day from the crackheads on her block.

What this has to do with the cold hearted commercial whoredom of the likes of Madonna and Stone, goodness only knows. And as for "using the power of her sexuality", no crooked old male tyrant ever said anything more radically sexist. Examine that formula of contemporary "feminism" and see what you get: "make others do things for us by the use of the promise or fact of sex". The others are of course males. What does this imply? Why, that power as such is in male hands, that they don't have equal power, that the women don't compete on the same level, that they don't have the equal power, that their power is superior in the sphere of sex and inferior or nonexistent elsewhere, that in order to achieve anything they must make men give it to them, that men are the ones with things to give, that women can't build things on their own and without male consent (the pooor dears!). Once, in the time of the dinosaurs, feminism used to be about equality of opportunity and what they call in this country "a level playing field."
Quite apart from the moral significance of this—which is despicable—it is patently false: a committed and capable woman is the equal in any field without the need to seduce to gain her ends. PERIOD. Even in Julie's

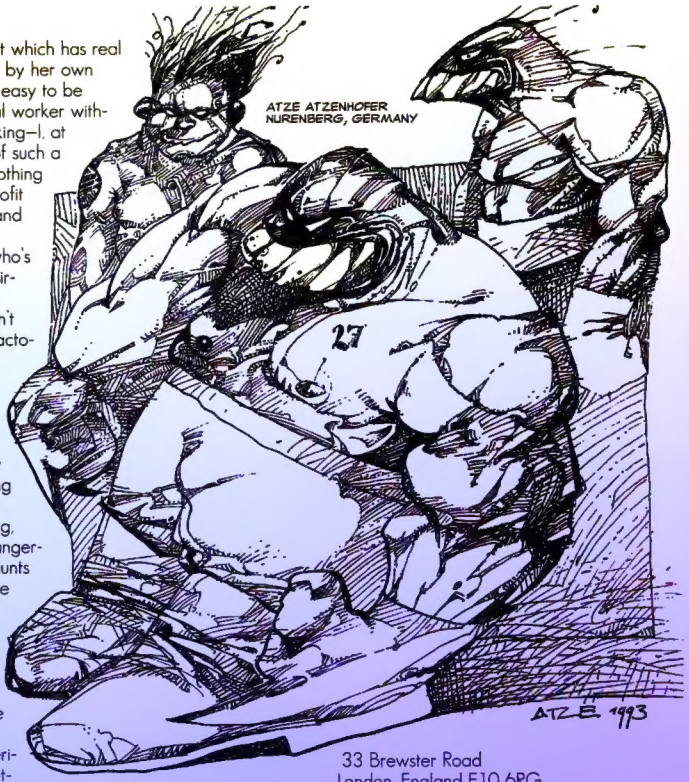


own life, the element which has real value has been built by her own efforts (it cannot be easy to be accepted as a social worker without any official backing—I, at least, never heard of such a thing) and adding nothing to her life. What profit is there in taunting and insulting some poor grey-skinned idiot who's "never been in an airport" and who is so inarticulate he doesn't even respond satisfactorily ("uh, I've never seen a social worker dressed like a hooker like that")? The only person to respond adequately to her sexual taunting is Mr. Gone, which points out, if anything, Julie's sterile and dangerous position: if he taunts the human wreckage she deals with (and manipulates) she can get no suitable response; if she gets response from more articulate and empowered males, she runs a serious risk of things getting out of hand.

There is no easy moral to be found in THE MAXX, although I believe there is an overreaching standard by which all the protagonists may be judged—though none of them embody it. Even Mr. Gone, a visibly despicable character, has something true to say to which Julie has no answer—to which her only answer is to silence the truth by murderous violence. Her apparent escape from him turns out, in the affecting final pages from #3, merely to cage her further and further in her own self-made jail. (And am I mistaken or does her vicious assault on her toenails indicate that something even nastier, something not a million miles from sadism, is stirring in her psyche? After all, her taunting of the homeless man is already not unlike sadism and domination...)

All in all, THE MAXX is a spectacular class act and a very thought-provoking piece of work. More power to your elbow, and I'll be waiting to see how this intense and profound story develops. And yeah, I have plenty more sausages to barbecue.

Yours sincerely,
Fabio Paolo Barbieri
Fight It Out Comic Productions



33 Brewster Road
London, England E10 6RG

Gee—you had me, up to the toenails. Otherwise, way cool letter.

Dear Sam,
Any chance of a Barney vs. Maxx crossover?
Just sitting around mindlessly(sometimes...),
Mathew Mitchell
North Creek,NY

I can't think of a more affectionate and a more repulsive character crossover (guess which is which?).

Dear Sam Kieth,
I like to collect comic books and I like to collect THE MAXX, but I would like to ask you not to start making your comic books kind of Satanic (you haven't started doing that yet)

because I am a Christian. I go to church.

Marc Rosales
Houston, TX

I'll keep Satan out if Bill will keep Barney out.

Sam,

What is it with you and eightballs? You have them scattered about in various places in your first two books!

Nick Grayson

Whenever you see an eightball, a note stuck on the wall, or a mug with a heart on it (groan), that's backround-guy-and-sometime-penciller Jim Sinclair up to no good.

Dear Sam,

About Heidi's letter. No, I don't believe THE MAXX is sexist, not in a way that would offend me. You see, I am so used to seeing women showing a lot of skin and wearing "imaginative" outfits in comics, that seeing Julie didn't bother me a bit—in fact, I liked her outfit. But if I saw a girl wearing that today in real life (not to say that all wouldn't), I'd either lose my lunch or shoot myself. I do find Julie's "they were asking for it" attitude a little upsetting, but I do accept that this is her way of thinking and that not all women in your comic will think this way.

Your friend and fan,
Syrena Done
Fairhope,AL

Gee—Heidi's getting famous! Yep—we got bucketloads of women with different views comin' down the pike.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I've heard some very disturbing rumors lately that Maxx is no longer going to be part of the Image line-up. Say it ain't so!! I love this book! Who is responsible for this travesty of justice? LET THE WITCH HUNT COMMENCE!!

'A was a man. Take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again'.
'—Shakespeare

Maxx-imum thanks for the ride,
Brian Miller
Pheonix, AZ

Hold on, Bri—the ride ain't over yet!

As a thanks to all the people who have been so supportive of the THE MAXX and due to the response being so good, we are throwing out the deadline on the purchase of MAXXIMUM SOUND! Hear it!!

Like I said in issue 4, THE MAXX has not been cancelled—Look for #6 in October!!

Art by Aaron Rix and Color by Steve Firchow.

We normally don't print color pieces, but we thought this one was beautiful enough to break our rules. But don't be encouraged by this! We need black and white inks!!